(c) what steps are being taken to ensure that unemployment is avoided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) The information on the number of closed small scale units is not maintained as it is not compulsory for small scale units to register themselves with the State Governments. The Reserve Bank of India, however, compiles data on sick small scale industries financed by banks. As per the Reserve Bank of India, the sickness in small scale industries for the last five years is as follows:

As at the end of	Total number of sick SSI units
March, 1995	2,68,815
March, 1996	2,62,376
March, 1997	2,35,032
March, 1998	2,21,536
March, 1999	3,06,221

(c) The Government if fully seized of the incidence of industrial sickness among Small Scale Industrial (SSI) units and has taken various measures to facilitate timely identification and rehabilitation of potentially viable sick units which, *inter-alia,* includes institutional mechanism in the form of State Level Inter-Institutional Committees (SLIICs); special rehabilitation cells in banks and State Financial Institutions; and elaborate guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India for extending rehabilitation assistance to the eligible units to ensure that unemployment is avoided.

Assistance for technological upgradation of tanneries

1664. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to assist small scale tenneries for technological upgradation for productivity improvement;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the ceiling of grant proposed to be given and procedure devised for monitoring the implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

A tannery modernisation scheme has been launched to provide financial assistance to the existing tannery units for undertaking modernisation programmes for a positive environmental impact, becoming competitive, effecting better capacity utilisation, achieving productivity gains and reducing wastage. The scheme would initially be in operation from 1999-2000 to 2001-2002 and cover about 30% of the existing tanneries during the 9th Five Year Plan.

(c) The assistance under the Tannery Modernisation Scheme will be limited to 30% of cost of machines subject to a maximum of Rs. 28 lakhs in case of small scale units and 20% for non-small scale units subject to a maximum of Rs. 35 lakhs. Implementation of the scheme and monitoring will be done by the Project Management Unit of the National Leather Development Programme (PMU-NLDP) through SIDBIs/Hs/Nationalised Banks/SFCs.

Clearance of pending projects

1665. SHRI C. RAMA CHANDRAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that number of project schemes and programmes are pending with Government awaiting clearance from various departments;

(b) what are the details of projects involved a financial expenditure of more than Rs. 50 crores in various sectors like irrigation and power;

(c) whether is a fact that the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has submitted several memoranda requesting early clearance of the projects; and

(d) if so, the reasons for the delay in clearing these projects, schemes and programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AN *D* PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) According to the details furnished by the Planning Commission and Department of Expenditure, as on 6th March, 2000,20 projects in various sectors including Irrigation and Power were in the process of appraisal. Details of these projects are given in the enclosed Statement *(see* below).